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First Committee
14th Meeting
Tuesday, 7 November 1995, 10 a.m.
New York

Chairman: Mr. Erdenechuluun . . . . . (Mongolia)

The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

Agenda items 57 to 81 (*continued*)

Consideration of draft resolutions submitted under all disarmament and international security agenda items

The Chairman: I call on the representative of Mexico to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.3.

Mr. de Icaza (Mexico) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The testing of nuclear weapons must end, and must end immediately. This is demanded by international public opinion, which has mobilized this year on an unprecedented scale to criticize the series of tests that are being carried out. This international public opinion has been evident not only in the statements of government spokesmen the world over and in regional bodies and meetings, including some at the level of Heads of State or Government, but also in demonstrations on the part of civil society in the streets and even at sea.

The international community knows that the time is ripe for easing tension in international relations in order to put an end once and for all to the proliferation of nuclear weapons in all their aspects, to reverse the nuclear-arms race, and to put an end to the threat posed by nuclear explosions to the health of humanity and the planet's environment.

Real non-proliferation of nuclear weapons is not limited to the horizontal spread: rather it includes the stockpiling and qualitative improvement and perfection of these weapons.

At the Review and Extension Conference of the States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the nuclear-weapon States made a commitment to act with the utmost restraint in nuclear testing pending the entry into force of a comprehensive test-ban treaty. Although the broadest interpretation of the meaning of "restraint" is clearly not compatible with that commitment, the carrying out of a series of tests or of tests aimed at perfecting nuclear weapons is in contradiction with the aim of non-proliferation.

Although the commitment, in its strict legal sense, has no binding force, it was approved along with the decision for an indefinite extension of the NPT and is irreversible, as indeed are all the decisions taken at that occasion. Included in those decisions is the approval of machinery strengthened by periodic reviews and verifications of the commitments and obligations undertaken by all States parties to the Treaty.

For my country, there is a clear link between the consolidation of an effective and genuine non-proliferation regime and progress towards the earliest possible elimination of weapons of mass destruction. On 5 September, the Government of Mexico stated, on the occasion of a nuclear test, that it is obvious that, if any of the periodic reviews of the non-proliferation Treaty should conclude that Powers are not complying with their commitments, we always have the option of taking drastic measures, including a review of our position on the non-proliferation Treaty on the basis of article X of that international instrument.

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Among the Principles and Objectives agreed upon at the NPT Review and Extension Conference, what stands out is the conclusion of negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty as soon as possible and by 1996 at the latest. As I had occasion to state when I had the honour to preside over the Conference on Disarmament this year, it is not easy — in fact, it is very difficult — to negotiate disarmament matters with the music of nuclear explosions in the background. If tests do not cease, we will lack the favourable atmosphere necessary to conclude these important negotiations within the proposed time-frame.

We have been told that the current tests are harmless and represent no danger to the health of people and the environment. In this regard, I would venture to quote from my own statement in the general debate in this Committee:

> "There are no proven truths, but there are obvious absurdities ... Our planet is a limited entity, and in the past 50 years 2,044 nuclear tests have been carried out — an average of approximately one every nine days. It is clearly absurd to say that this incessant bombardment, this constant shaking up of the innards of our planet, has had and will have no effect on the environment or on this Earth, which belongs to all of us and to our descendants." *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Fiftieth Session, First Committee, 3rd meeting, p. 9)*

We believe that the profound concern regarding the possible negative effects of underground nuclear tests is fully justified. The Organization of American States, for example, stated on 13 September that nuclear tests being carried out in the South Pacific pose a potential risk to the health and security of surrounding States and their living resources and environment, and do not take into account the precautionary principle contained in the Rio Declaration on environment and development and in other regional agreements.

These are some of the reasons that inspired my delegation to support the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/50/L.3, in which the General Assembly would reaffirm that the cessation of all nuclear testing will contribute to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and provide a favourable climate for the conclusion of negotiations on a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. The Assembly, considering that nuclear testing was not consistent with undertakings by the nuclear-weapon States at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference, deeply concerned about the potential negative effects of underground nuclear testing and sharing the alarm expressed internationally, regionally and nationally, would strongly deplore all current nuclear testing and urge the immediate cessation of all nuclear testing.

My delegation hopes that this draft resolution will be adopted by a broad majority representing the international community as a whole, because nuclear testing must come to an end and must do so immediately.

The Chairman: I call on the Secretary of the Committee, who will provide us with some information regarding our work.

Mr. Kheradi (Secretary of the Committee): I should like to provide some updated information concerning the current status of draft resolutions.

As of 6 p.m. yesterday, we had received a total of 50 drafts, two of which are draft decisions and the rest draft resolutions. I should point out that all the draft decisions and resolutions up to the one in A/C.1/50/L.33 have been issued and are available as of this morning. It is my hope that the balance will be available by tomorrow.

I should also refer to one other issue. The letter I received by fax from you, Sir, in your capacity as Chairman of the First Committee, addressed to me in my capacity as Secretary of the First Committee, reads as follows, though I must emphasize that of course this letter was received, so to speak, before the 6 p.m. deadline.

"Dear Mr. Kheradi,

> "As you may recall, agenda item 79, entitled 'Rationalization of the work and reform of the agenda of the First Committee', has been discussed by the Bureau. Subsequently, I made an oral report to the First Committee, where the membership agreed to the Bureau's proposal to postpone the discussion of this item to a later session. It has also been agreed that the Bureau, with the assistance of the Secretariat, will table the draft of a decision to the First Committee at an appropriate time. I therefore kindly ask you, Mr. Secretary, to assist me in setting up a meeting of the Bureau for the purpose of discussing the draft decision to be proposed to the Committee."

I should point out in that connection that we in the Secretariat actually do have a brief draft of a decision and we will bring it to the attention of the Chairman and the Bureau for approval and subsequent recommendation to the First Committee.

May I also inform the Committee that the following countries have become sponsors of the following draft resolutions:

A/C.1/50/L.1/Rev.1: Chile, Mongolia, Nigeria, Portugal and Slovakia;

A/C.1/50/L.3: Botswana, Maldives, Panama, Paraguay, Thailand and Ukraine;

A/C.1/50/L.5: Cuba;

A/C.1/50/L.7: Australia, Belarus, Canada, Côte d'Ivoire, Germany, Iceland, Mali, Norway, Peru, Sweden and Romania;

A/C.1/50/L.8: Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, Estonia, Ethiopia, France, Greece, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Myanmar, Nigeria, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Ukraine, United Kingdom and United States;

A/C.1/50/L.9: Bangladesh, Indonesia, Republic of Moldova, Pakistan and Russian Federation;

A/C.1/50/L.11: Argentina and Mongolia;

A/C.1/50/L.14: Chile and Peru;

A/C.1/50/L.24: Japan; and

A/C.1/50/L.15: Argentina.

Mr. Samana (Papua New Guinea): I wish to speak on behalf of my country, Papua New Guinea, which currently holds the Chair of the South Pacific Forum, and on behalf of the South Pacific Forum countries in support of the draft resolution on nuclear testing contained in document A/C.1/50/L.3.

Before I do so, may I congratulate you, Sir, and the other members of the Bureau on your elections to your posts in this important Committee. Papua New Guinea assures you of its fullest support and cooperation in the discharge of your important duties.

May I also take this opportunity, on behalf of the South Pacific Forum countries, to express our deepest sympathy to the family of the late Prime Minister Rabin and the people of Israel for the most horrific act of terrorism that has taken the life of a leader who championed the cause of peace for his people, the Palestinians and the world. It is our hope that the people of Israel will stand firm and continue to support the great cause of peace that the late Prime Minister stood for and fought for and which sadly led to his death.

The South Pacific Forum countries have consistently argued that nuclear testing in any part of the world is a step backward. Such actions runs contrary to the objectives and the spirit of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and are a complete violation of trust between nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty. Continuous nuclear- weapon testing undermines the delicate balance and confidence established by States parties to the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty and poses a serious threat to international peace and security.

We strongly believe from our experience that nuclear testing is a direct threat to our environment and to the survival of our people. We do not accept the argument that nuclear testing is scientifically safe. There is no such thing as a safe nuclear test. Dealing with weapons of mass destruction is a very dangerous and highly risky experiment, one in which the slightest accident could be and can be fatal to human life and is potentially dangerous to the environment and the health of the people now and in the future.

There is absolutely no justification for undertaking such a disgraceful and deplorable activity. It only creates anxieties and aggravates good-neighbourly relations. Those who adhere to the archaic principles of nuclear deterrence are living in the past and working against the spirit of international cooperation.

We thank those who have come forward as sponsors of the draft resolution before us and we call upon the fraternal States of Latin America and the Caribbean that are parties to the Treaty of Tlatelolco; our fraternal States from the continent of Africa that are also working towards a nuclear-free zone in Africa; friendly States of the Middle East and Asia; and like-minded countries of the European Union, including the Eastern European countries, to stand together in solidarity and vote for the draft resolution opposing nuclear testing.

Like many of the countries members of the Forum, we would have favoured a much stronger text, one drafted in more condemnatory terms. However, in the interest of consensus, we are prepared to live with the draft resolution before us.

In our opinion, a vote in support of the draft resolution is a vote against intolerance. It is a vote against

arrogance and insensitivity; a vote against myopic parochialism; a vote against those who dare to threaten international peace and security; a vote against those whose actions threaten our national, regional and global environment and the ecosystem; and a vote against the abuse of political power against humanity. In sum, a vote for the draft resolution is a vote against irrationality.

A positive vote for the draft resolution is a vote for peace and a vote for a future based on confidence. A positive vote is a vote for tolerance; a vote for the protection of our environment; and a vote for humanity.

We call on those of moral courage and good conscience to vote in support of the draft resolution in the name of international solidarity and universalism and to pave the way for a new moral order; to promote peace and not havoc; to promote human development, not human destruction; and to promote good will and not ill will. In this context, we consider that a vote in favour of the draft resolution will pave the way forward, establishing regional nuclear-free zones and thus enhance greater international confidence, which will provide sound conditions for peace and development.

On behalf of the countries members of the Forum, we stand firm in support of the draft resolution and call upon the representatives of the States Members of the United Nations for their valuable support, which would send a clear message to the international community that we cannot accept the actions of those who dare to threaten international peace and the basic sustenance of human life.

Mrs. Kurokochi (Japan): I should like to make some comments on draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.3, which has just been introduced by the representative of Mexico and of which Japan is a co-sponsor.

The nuclear testing currently being conducted by two nuclear-weapon States is extremely disturbing to international efforts towards nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Therefore, it is of vital importance for the international community to show its strong determination to pursue the immediate cessation of all nuclear testing. In the light of this fact, it is crucial that the General Assembly adopt this draft resolution with the widest possible support by Member States.

Let me explain briefly our thoughts on some of the elements of the draft resolution. First, the purpose of the draft resolution is not to condemn any particular country. The aim of this draft resolution is to express our opposition to nuclear testing. Accordingly, the draft resolution does not mention any country by name. It focuses on the current nuclear testing.

Secondly, some countries have expressed their concern that this draft resolution might have a negative effect on the negotiations for a comprehensive test-ban treaty. On the contrary, we believe that showing strong opposition to nuclear testing will enable us to progress in those negotiations with a view to the earliest possible conclusion with good results. The draft resolution is a clear expression of the international community's position against nuclear testing. With this draft resolution, we expect that nuclear-weapon States as well as non-nuclear-weapon States will further their efforts towards the successful completion of the negotiations on the comprehensive test-ban treaty.

Thirdly, it has been argued by some countries that the current nuclear testing is not inconsistent with the "utmost restraint" mentioned in the Principles and Objectives decided at the Review and Extension Conference of the States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). It is a fact, however, that, according to those Principles and Objectives, the nuclear-weapon States should exercise utmost restraint. We consider this to be a commitment on the part of the nuclear-weapon States. We also believe that the current nuclear testing is not a demonstration of "utmost restraint", but that it actually shows less restraint after the NPT Review and Extension Conference.

Having said that, I would like to make it clear that the phrase "not consistent with" in this draft resolution is not meant to suggest that the countries in question are violating international law. Furthermore, the words "nuclear testing" refer of course to nothing but the current underground nuclear testing begun following the NPT Review Conference.

Nuclear testing is a matter of global concern. We must demonstrate our international solidarity against nuclear testing. The adoption of this draft resolution with widespread support would demonstrate our determination to abolish nuclear testing, thus giving a positive impetus to the negotiations on the comprehensive test-ban treaty. Japan strongly appeals to all Member States to support this draft resolution.

Mr. Starr (Australia): Australia would much have preferred to be speaking today in support of the positive trends evident in today's world, such as the unprecedented international commitment to achieving a nuclear-weapon-

free world. Instead, we find ourselves speaking on an issue which belongs firmly in yesterday's world — the world of the cold war and the nuclear arms race. That issue is nuclear testing.

The Australian Government's position on nuclear testing is unequivocal: we strongly deplore and condemn it. Nuclear testing has no place in the current era. It must end and it must end now.

These are the central points of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/50/L.3, which was introduced this morning and enjoys a wide range of sponsors, including Australia. Many things could be said about nuclear testing, but we and the other sponsors of this draft resolution have chosen to keep its message simple and direct. As the text says, we "strongly deplore" nuclear testing and we urge its "immediate cessation".

A strong and clear call for the immediate cessation of nuclear testing is of critical importance and we look to see the widest support for this call among Members of the United Nations. Nuclear testing flies in the face of international opinion, as demonstrated by the outcry from around the globe, including in France, in response to the French Government's decision to resume testing in the South Pacific.

Nuclear testing flies in the face of the post-cold-war disarmament agenda. This agenda includes historic bilateral arms-reduction treaties between the major nuclear-weapon States and a multilateral treaty banning all nuclear testing, the comprehensive test-ban treaty soon to be concluded in Geneva. Nuclear testing also raises unacceptable concerns about the potential effects on the environment, particularly in the fragile marine environment of the South Pacific coral atolls where France conducts its tests. We do not have information to lay those concerns to rest.

Nuclear testing flies in the face of the political commitments made by States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) at the NPT Review and Extension Conference six months ago. Those commitments, contained in the Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, which accompanied the decision to extend the NPT indefinitely, included a political commitment by the nuclear-weapon States to exercise utmost restraint pending the entry into force of a comprehensive test-ban treaty. There has been much debate about the words "utmost restraint", but let us be clear. The Chinese Government tested almost before the ink was dry on the NPT extension decision. And, shortly thereafter, France announced an intensive programme of eight tests at the rate of about one a month. Such actions cannot by any definition be considered restrained.

Australia welcomes the continuing commitment of the United States, Russia and the United Kingdom to their own unilateral nuclear-testing moratoriums. We reject utterly the decisions of France and China to resume or continue testing.

The NPT Conference reaffirmed the objective we all share of a nuclear-weapon-free world. The cessation of nuclear testing can only assist our efforts towards that objective: its continuation can only hinder them. These are the reasons why we are joining others in calling for the immediate cessation of testing. The word "immediate" signifies a unique point in time. That time, we believe, is now.

Mr. Abdul Momin (Brunei Darussalam): My delegation and I would like to extend our many congratulations to you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of this Committee.

When the Review and Extension Conference of the States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty was concluded here in New York six months ago, much trust was placed in the early conclusion of the comprehensive test-ban treaty, about which I wish to speak briefly.

For Brunei Darussalam, the comprehensive test-ban treaty is of the highest priority in terms of halting the nuclear-arms race and achieving nuclear disarmament. Brunei Darussalam also believes that that treaty would be the most effective way to eliminate existing nuclear weapons and prevent anyone from acquiring new ones. We also see no need for the tests to be carried out under the pretext of the safety and reliability of nuclear weapons. Hence, the recent nuclear testing deeply concerns us. It is not consistent with undertakings made by the nuclear-weapon States at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

We therefore call for the immediate cessation of all nuclear testing and feel that this will be a strong contribution to our overall aims of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and nuclear disarmament and will provide a favourable climate for the conclusion of negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty. The treaty should be in force for all time without any exception, and the zero yield of the scope of the treaty, which was endorsed

unequivocally by the three nuclear-weapon Powers and many other States, is tantamount to a truly comprehensive ban on nuclear testing.

In this regard, Brunei Darussalam welcomes the declaration made by the nuclear States and their commitment to sign the treaty before September 1996, and this will be followed by its early entry into force. My delegation is confident that the treaty will be concluded as scheduled in the same spirit as that which inspired the signing of other treaties of the same nature, especially those between the United States and the former Soviet Union.

The indefinite extension of the NPT sent a clear message. Besides the fact that it continues to be the most universal and fundamental instrument for the prevention of the spread of nuclear weapons, its extension demonstrated the international community's common desire to reject all weapons of mass destruction. Despite some positive developments in the area of nuclear disarmament, my delegation would like to reiterate its belief that more could have been done over the past year.

We share the concern of many others about the possibility of more countries possessing these weapons of mass destruction. We have also still to witness any dramatic reduction in the quality of arms in terms of their ability to destroy. This means that, given the modernization of weapons and their capability and accuracy, the threat of weapons of mass destruction has not yet been adequately lessened.

The extension of the NPT is not an end in itself: it must be followed by further steps towards complete disarmament, adequate security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States and the establishment of internationally recognized nuclear-weapon-free zones. In regional terms, Brunei Darussalam remains fully committed in its efforts to ensure a peaceful and secure environment. We look forward to the completion of the negotiations on the treaty on a South-East Asia nuclear-weapon-free zone.

The major Powers should play a leading role in promoting a peaceful and secure environment. In this regard, Brunei Darussalam welcomes the United States statement of 11 August, particularly the part regarding a comprehensive test-ban treaty. Brunei Darussalam sees this as a manifestation of the collective stance that the proliferation of nuclear weapons needs to be totally and immediately curbed.

As a reflection of our commitment to this high ideal, Brunei Darussalam has consistently supported efforts towards the early conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty. I should like to give to the Committee Brunei Darussalam's assurance of its full cooperation in the realization of the Committee's objectives. In this regard, my delegation is pleased to join in sponsoring the draft resolution on this subject now before us.

Mr. Keating (New Zealand): I join previous speakers in supporting the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/50/L.3, of which New Zealand is also a sponsor.

This session of the First Committee is taking place against the background of the Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, a conference at which the norms of nuclear non-proliferation were reinforced and cemented in place by the decision to extend the Treaty indefinitely. That was, New Zealand believes, a wise move. Decisions taken at that Conference have laid the foundations for the structure of a new international security regime that will take us into the twenty-first century.

All parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), nuclear and non-nuclear, reiterated that the ultimate goal is the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. All committed themselves to the first practical step towards this: the completion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty no later than next year.

But only two days after the Conference concluded, China exploded a nuclear device and, subsequently, France resumed testing in the South Pacific. Three tests have been carried out so far; more are planned. As the draft resolution before us makes clear, individuals, countries and whole regions have expressed their real alarm at this new spate of nuclear testing.

In our region — because that is where tests are actually taking place — leaders have expressed more than alarm: South Pacific leaders have expressed extreme outrage. We have condemned nuclear testing, and called for it to be stopped immediately.

The reason for this alarm, this outrage throughout the world, can be understood in the light of the fact that these same countries that are continuing to test nuclear weapons resumed their testing programmes in disregard of commitments entered into at the NPT Review and Extension Conference. Let us recall that, at that Conference, they agreed to exercise "utmost restraint". We

hear arguments addressed against draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.3 to the effect that there was never any legal obligation in respect of nuclear testing entered into at the NPT Review and Extension Conference. We believe that that argument is disingenuous and mischievous: let us be quite clear — the draft resolution is not drafted on the basis of an argument by anyone that legal obligations were undertaken at the NPT Review and Extension Conference. They were not. What was agreed at that Conference were solemn political undertakings, and it is those solemn political obligations that have been flagrantly violated and now give rise to this storm of political reaction.

It is simply not tenable to argue that a commitment to exercise utmost restraint could be compatible with what China and France have been doing. The word "restraint" on its own means holding back from something one would otherwise do, but when that word is qualified by the additional word "utmost", it can be interpreted in good faith only as an undertaking that no further nuclear-test explosions will take place pending the conclusion of the comprehensive test-ban treaty.

Against that background, this draft resolution demonstrates that it is not only the community of non-governmental organizations, not only the general public of the world, that is outraged, but that this behaviour is deplored in the strongest possible terms by Governments as well.

This message has to get through: nuclear-test explosions are deplorable, and must cease immediately. New Zealand urges all other members of this Committee to join us in delivering this message by voting in favour of the draft resolution when it is put to the vote.

Mr. Izquierdo (Ecuador) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The delegation of Ecuador wishes to make a brief statement in support of draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.3, which was submitted this morning by the representative of Mexico.

With this in view, the delegation of Ecuador wishes to restate its position: it repudiates nuclear tests inasmuch as they are steps towards vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons, the destabilization of international security and the irreversible destruction of the environment.

At the same time, we should like to remind members that, in the Quito Declaration of 5 September 1995, the Heads of State and Government of the Rio Group referred explicitly to the subject of nuclear tests in the following terms:

> "As the elected leaders of countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, the first nuclear-weapon-free zone, we express our deep concern over and condemnation of the resumption of nuclear tests by the People's Republic of China and the decision of the Government of France to resume testing in the Pacific, the geographic region in which most member countries of the Rio Group are situated. Considering that such actions adversely affect the climate for the pursuit of negotiations on a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty, we urgently appeal to the Governments of all States which possess this type of weapons to observe unilateral or agreed moratoria on all nuclear testing in order to speed up the negotiations on an effectively verifiable multilateral treat banning all nuclear tests." (*A/50/425, annex, para. 20*)

In the light of this Declaration, my delegation calls for the greatest possible support for the draft resolution.

Mr. Felicio (Brazil): The Government of Brazil has already expressed regret at, and condemned, the resumption of nuclear testing by some nuclear-weapon States. Brazil has joined in the declarations of a similar nature made in other forums, such as the Rio Group and the Organization of American States. Together with the States parties to the Treaty of Tlateloco we have joined the States parties to the Treaty of Rarotonga in condemning the nuclear tests. On the other hand, my Government has expressed its appreciation to those countries which continue to observe the nuclear-testing moratoriums they have declared. It is our expectation that countries supporting disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction will advocate the immediate cessation of nuclear tests. Nuclear-test explosions should stop immediately. For this reason Brazil is joining in sponsoring the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/50/L.3.

Insisting on carrying out nuclear tests goes against the general trend towards nuclear disarmament, which is our legitimate aspiration. Testing may also interfere with the Geneva negotiations of the Conference on Disarmament on a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty, which the international community has pledged to achieve next year. It is appropriate that the General Assembly take the action proposed in the draft resolution before us. We are certain that this draft resolution reflects the wish of the international community. We expect that a very large number of delegations will vote in favour of this resolution.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of Mongolia, who will introduce the draft resolutions contained in documents A/C.1/50/L.16 and A/C.1/50/L.31.

Mr. Yumjar (Mongolia): Mongolia has joined in sponsoring the draft resolution on "nuclear testing" contained in document A/C.1/50/L.3, which was introduced this morning by the representative of Mexico on behalf of its sponsors. Mongolia has done so because it firmly believes in the urgent need for the complete cessation of all nuclear testing and for the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty at an early date.

We are gratified to note that the political will now exists to conclude such a treaty no later than 1996. However, it is with deep regret that the two nuclear-weapon Powers have chosen to disregard the will of the international community and their own commitment undertaken during the Review and Extension Conference of the States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to "exercise utmost restraint". The Heads of State or Government of the States members of the Non-Aligned Movement, at their latest Conference in Colombia, firmly rejected all kinds of nuclear testing and strongly deplored the resumption and continuation of nuclear testing. They called upon all the nuclear-weapon States to act in a manner consistent with the negotiations and objectives of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty.

Mongolia fully subscribes to the strong appeal made in the draft resolution for the immediate cessation of all nuclear testing. Our resolve for an urgent ban on all nuclear testing is strengthened further by the fact that those tests are being conducted in the vicinity of the Mongolian borders. My Government expresses its fervent hope that the two nuclear-weapon States will heed the demand of the international community and immediately stop the nuclear-weapon tests. We call upon all States to give their active support to the draft resolution.

I now have the pleasure of introducing, on behalf of the sponsors, draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.16, entitled "Disarmament Week". The draft resolution is sponsored by the delegations of Afghanistan, China, Costa Rica, Fiji, Indonesia, Japan, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, Samoa, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Viet Nam and Mongolia.

Disarmament Week, observed annually since 1978, has contributed substantially to increasing general public awareness of and support for the disarmament process and the role of the United Nations in this field. The report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/50/291 and the special meeting of the First Committee as well as other events traditionally held in observance of Disarmament Week have once again proven that the international community continues to rely on Disarmament Week as an appropriate occasion for further promoting national and international activities to educate and inform the public about major disarmament issues and developments.

The text of the draft resolution before us reproduces, with some slight changes, the text of General Assembly resolution 47/54 C, adopted at the forty-seventh session without a vote.

In the preambular part of draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.16 the General Assembly would note the fundamental change that has been brought about by the end of the cold war and of bipolar confrontation, welcome the important recent achievements in disarmament, stress the increasing role and prestige of the United Nations, and emphasize anew the need for and the importance of world public opinion in support of disarmament efforts. It would recall the recommendations concerning Disarmament Week taken by the General Assembly at its first, second and third special sessions devoted to disarmament; and would recognize the significance of the annual observance of Disarmament Week.

In the operative part of the draft resolution the General Assembly would take note of the report of the Secretary-General (A/50/291); commend all States and organizations for their support and participation in Disarmament Week; invite States to take into account the elements of the model programme for Disarmament Week while carrying out appropriate measures at the local level. It would invite Governments and international and national non-governmental organizations to continue to take part in Disarmament Week and would invite the Secretary-General to continue to use the United Nations informational organs to promote better understanding among the world public of disarmament problems and the objectives of Disarmament Week. It would decide to include in the provisional agenda of the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly the item entitled "Disarmament Week".

I express the hope of sponsors that draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.16 will be adopted by the First Committee without a vote.

I should like now to introduce the draft resolution on the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific (A/C.1/50/L.31). I am doing so on behalf of the following countries: Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Japan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Marshall Islands, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Peru, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Viet Nam and Mongolia.

The sponsors of the draft resolution believe that the Kathmandu Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament is doing important work in establishing a habit of dialogue in this highly diverse and complex region of the world. The sponsors therefore reaffirm their strong support for the continued operation and further strengthening of the Regional Centre as an essential promoter of the "Kathmandu process" — the more so at a time of increasing recognition of the need for regional approaches in addressing confidence-building, disarmament and other security-related issues in that part of the world.

In this connection, the sponsors appeal to Member States — particularly those within the Asia-Pacific region, as well as to international governmental and non-governmental organizations and foundations, to make voluntary contributions in order to strengthen the programme of activities of the Regional Centre. Support for the Regional Centres in Asia and the Pacific, in Africa and in Latin America and the Caribbean is vitally important to further sustaining and intensifying their commendable activities.

The sponsors hope that the draft resolution will be supported by all Member States. It is in this light that my delegation has decided to be a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.24 on the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa and the Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Mr. Bune (Fiji): Fiji is one of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.3 because of our total rejection of nuclear testing in all environments and in all forms. We condemn the recent nuclear testing by France in the South Pacific, as well as nuclear testing by China.

But our main focus and opposition relate to France, which has been conducting tests in our region — our home. With its third, and latest, test, France has shown its utter and complete contempt for the concern and opposition among significant sections of the international community and for the outrage of the people of the region.

Fiji opposes such tests. We are gravely concerned about their effects on our health and on the region's environment. The current testing is poisoning the mood at the current session of the Conference on Disarmament, creating an impossible atmosphere. In addition, it works against all our efforts towards global non-proliferation. It also sours regional relations with France. The resumption of nuclear testing in the Pacific has undermined the positive role previously played by that country.

France has defied the will of the people of the South Pacific — indeed, of the world — by continuing its nuclear testing. The Government of France has shown yet again its callous disregard for the concern of its neighbours and its blatant disregard even for the views of the French people. France has ignored the rational and urgent pleas of those most affected by its horrendous continuation of nuclear tests in the South Pacific.

Fiji is committed to nuclear disarmament and a nuclear-free world, which is why we supported the decision to extend the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

Fiji remains concerned that the French Government appears to be oblivious to the environmental and health risks posed by its continued testing. It urges France to address these concerns immediately and to provide the international community with access to all relevant scientific data and to the testing sites themselves to make possible an independent and comprehensive assessment of the effects of testing. If the tests are safe — as the French Government claims — what is the need for this cloak of secrecy, which deprives the scientific community of objective data to assess the ramifications?

We have noted with interest the recent announcement by France, the United States and the United Kingdom of their intention to become signatories to the Protocols to the Treaty on the South Pacific nuclear-free zone. If France has certain intentions, we call upon it to end its nuclear testing in the South Pacific immediately. We also urge the immediate closure of facilities associated with such testing, except those required for future environmental monitoring.

Mururoa was the subject of three independent scientific missions during the 1980s. The people conducting these studies were not given complete freedom to take samples, and the information available to them was limited. The missions found, however, that by the mid-1980s there had been some visible damage to Mururoa. The tests, by

their very nature, had caused localized fracturing of the rock around their sites.

Fiji and the South Pacific will hold France fully responsible for any adverse impact on the environment and people of the South Pacific as a result of its nuclear testing. We shall continue to add our protest to those of all Pacific peoples condemning nuclear testing in the region. We shall continue to insist that our ocean environment should not be a dumping-ground for others to pollute, as is happening at present.

Fiji is one of the sponsors of the draft resolution before the Committee because we are convinced that so long as there are nuclear weapons and nuclear testing, the horrors of a nuclear holocaust, which for too protracted a period have cast a long shadow over mankind, will remain. The text of the draft resolution is measured and rational. It expresses national, regional and international alarm about the recent nuclear tests.

Other representatives have canvassed the import of the text in greater detail. Suffice it for me, at this point, to say that the draft resolution strongly deplores all current nuclear tests. Its sponsors want testing to be stopped now. In its preambular paragraphs it places in context the basis of our deep concern about the current tests. The text is balanced and fair. It does not resort to name-calling, but it is an unequivocal political statement to France, as well as to China and others who might toy with the idea of testing a nuclear device, that the international community, of which we are a part, condemns and rejects such actions and that it will not be afraid to continue to do so.

France has been a very good friend of Fiji, but the future of the South Pacific and that of Fiji are a matter of grave concern to the countries of the South Pacific. We consider our future — the future of our people and of our livelihood — to be seriously threatened by the resumption and continuation of nuclear testing in the region.

On behalf of the Government and people of Fiji — indeed, on behalf of the South Pacific region — I am making a special appeal to all those countries that want peace in our world, to all those countries which, by treaty or otherwise, have opposed nuclear testing. I recall specifically the support of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean for the Treaty of Tlatelolco, as well as the General Assembly resolutions that resulted in the cessation of French nuclear testing in Africa.

I urge all delegations to support the draft resolution before the Committee. It reflects Fiji's deep dismay over an unfriendly act. Fiji urges all States — big and small, developing and developed — to support the draft resolution. A vote in favour will be a vote for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. A vote in favour will be a vote for our children's security and a vote for peace. I ask representatives to promote this noble cause by supporting the draft resolution.

Mr. Slade (Samoa): This is the first opportunity I have had to speak in this Committee, and I want to take advantage of it to express to you, Sir, the happiness of my delegation and our full satisfaction in working under your chairmanship.

I want also, if I may, to record the very deep shock and sadness of my Government and of our delegation at the tragic passing of Prime Minister Rabin. May the legacy of this great man of peace live on and bear fruit for all the children of Israel.

Samoa has no hesitation in adding its voice and its support as a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.3, on nuclear testing. I must say that we would have preferred a resolution with stronger language on this important issue, but in the interest of consensus, we would add our vote in support of this text.

As a member of the South Pacific Forum, we associate ourselves fully with the statement delivered by our leader, the Ambassador of Papua New Guinea. This is an issue of the utmost importance to my country, and one about which my Government holds very strong views and has very strong concerns. Samoa believes very deeply that the greatest step which we can take towards our common goals of international peace and security is through the complete and ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons.

However, these important and fundamental goals are being severely jeopardized by the action of some nuclear Powers which have potentially far-reaching and disastrous effects for us all. Like so many in this room, we worked hard for the extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and we fully support the current negotiations on a comprehensive nuclear-test- ban treaty. These are important historical milestones, indeed, in the process of our common search for world peace. But, as far as Samoa is concerned, these goals are being severely endangered by the current nuclear-testing programmes. They are completely incompatible with strongly worded assurances and undertakings given by the nuclear-power

States at the Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). In the case of France, its testing programme is in direct contravention of the legal obligations of France under the Noumea Convention, which prohibits radioactive pollution in the South Pacific. But, even more important, this testing is being carried out with complete and callous disregard for the health of the people of French Polynesia, and with disregard for the health and the environment of my people and our region.

Of all of the Members of the United Nations, my country is located closest to the test site. As we have heard in this Committee this morning, the leaders of the Pacific region have been consistent in their condemnation of French nuclear testing in our area. We, too, want to repeat their extreme outrage. The people of the Pacific have had a long history of suffering from the effects of nuclear testing. Look at what has happened in the Marshall Islands. We have seen first-hand from past experiences, such as the Chernobyl disaster, how radioactive pollution cannot be confined to the primary site. And for the Pacific region, where small island nations are linked by ocean currents and tropical sea breezes, the disastrous effects of nuclear testing are immense. This becomes not just a regional but also a global problem of very huge proportions.

There is a significant body of scientific opinion that contradicts the complacency of assurance by France that there is no danger from its underground nuclear tests.

Samoa is deeply appreciative of those nuclear-weapon States that have continued their nuclear-testing moratoriums. We strongly condemn and reject all current and future nuclear testing, and we call especially on France to stop immediately — and to do so in the face of worldwide international and regional condemnation.

Lastly, we strongly appeal to all delegations to join us in supporting and in sponsoring this very important draft resolution.

The Chairman: I now call on the representative of Pakistan to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.6.

Mr. Munir Akram (Pakistan): I have asked to speak to introduce the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/50/L.6, entitled "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia".

In 1972, when inaugurating Pakistan's first nuclear power reactor in Karachi, the former Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mr. Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, advanced the proposal for a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia. After the Pokharan nuclear explosion of May 1974, Pakistan reiterated this proposal. We were gratified that the United Nations General Assembly endorsed the creation of such a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia in its resolution 3265 B (XXIX) of 9 December 1974.

This endorsement has been reaffirmed in the United Nations General Assembly by an ever increasing number of votes each year for the past 20 years.

Since the first special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament, held in 1978, the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones is considered as an important component of the world community's endeavour to promote the twin goals of nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. It is ironic that while considerable progress has been made towards the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones in various other parts of the world, there has been no significant progress towards the Assembly's repeatedly affirmed objective of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia.

Pakistan warmly welcomes the consolidation of the regime established by the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean — the Treaty of Tlatelolco — and the adoption by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) of the Pelindaba Treaty on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa. With the full implementation of the Rarotonga Treaty in the South Pacific, and the proposed creation of nuclear-free "peace zones" in the South Atlantic and the Indian Ocean, the world community may well succeed in eliminating the production and the presence of nuclear weapons in the entire southern hemisphere.

Pakistan remains hopeful that a nuclear-weapon-free zone will, one day, become a reality in South Asia. All the States of South Asia have made unilateral declarations, at the highest levels, pledging themselves not to acquire, develop or manufacture nuclear weapons. What is needed is a sincere effort to transform these unilateral pledges into an effective and acceptable multilateral non-proliferation regime, as has been accomplished in other parts of the world.

The draft resolution in document A/C.1/50/L.6 is designed to reaffirm the international community's firm support for the objective of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia. This objective is all the more urgent in view of

the tensions and conflicts that afflict this region, in which one fifth of humanity lives.

Various endeavours have been made in the course of the past several years to advance this objective, including proposals for five-Power and nine-nation multilateral talks on non-proliferation, security and related issues in South Asia. Pakistan will continue to work for agreement on some practical means of promoting the resolution of disputes, nuclear and military restraint and the goal of non-proliferation in the South Asian region.

It is the sincere hope of the delegation of Pakistan that the draft resolution in document A/C.1/50/L.6 will be adopted with the widest possible majority by the Committee and by the United Nations General Assembly.

Mr. Edwards (Marshall Islands): At the outset, I wish to associate my delegation with the statements made by Mexico, Papua New Guinea and many other delegations on draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.3. I wish also to reaffirm the statements that my delegation has made in the plenary meeting of the General Assembly, at the Special Commemorative Meeting and in this Committee.

Although many countries have congratulated the delegations of France, the United Kingdom and the United States on their announcement last week that they will sign the relevant Protocols of the Treaty of Rarotonga before the end of the first half of 1996, my delegation would have wished to see the Protocols signed a long time ago. Anything less than an immediate cessation of nuclear testing in the Pacific by France is unacceptable.

One nuclear-weapon test anywhere is one too many. A single test in the Pacific will add to the burden we will face in the future. In the interest of time, my delegation would refer the Committee to the statements I mentioned earlier.

Marshall Islands has joined in sponsoring this draft resolution because we must recognize that what is occurring is simply wrong, and we must put a stop to it.

Mr. Chua (Singapore): Singapore, together with many other States, is sponsoring the draft resolution on nuclear testing (A/C.1/50/L.3) under the agenda item "General and complete disarmament". It was only after careful deliberation that Singapore decided to co-sponsor this draft resolution, which we believe deals with one of the key issues facing, not only this Committee or the United Nations, but the entire global community.

Singapore is fully committed to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and to disarmament. We regard the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which is the only international treaty aimed at containing nuclear proliferation, as one of the cornerstones of global security. That was why Singapore firmly supported the indefinite extension of the NPT at the Review and Extension Conference held in May this year. This decision was based on our belief that all States parties to the NPT, and in particular the nuclear-weapon States, should redouble their efforts to free the world of nuclear weapons and ensure a secure and peaceful global environment.

However, as is well known, negotiations at the NPT Review and Extension Conference were difficult. Although consensus was eventually reached, the difficult negotiations showed that it was a fragile consensus. The fact that nuclear tests were conducted immediately after the Conference, and despite widespread international protests, threatens to unravel this consensus. It was for that reason that Singapore supported the statement made by the Chairman of the Regional Forum of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), which called on all those countries that were planning to conduct further nuclear tests to put an immediate end to such testing. We also continue to hope that all States parties to the NPT, and in particular the nuclear-weapon States, would abide by the agreement reached at the Review and Extension Conference to work towards the early conclusion of a universal, internationally and effectively verifiable comprehensive test-ban treaty by 1996 and to exercise utmost restraint in the meantime.

The draft resolution before us has a twofold objective: to express the international community's clear commitment to put an end to nuclear testing and to give encouragement for the speedy and satisfactory conclusion of the CTBT. We believe that a strong signal from the international community against nuclear testing will help move the negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty forward. It is therefore important that the First Committee adopt this draft resolution with the widest possible support. A clear endorsement would not only strengthen the credibility of the NPT regime but help to promote nuclear disarmament and the realization of the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

Mr. Ocampo (Peru) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The delegation of Peru associates itself with the arguments put forward by the delegation of Mexico and by the other delegations that spoke earlier and which have co-sponsored

the draft resolution on nuclear tests contained in document A/C.1/50/L.3. Peru is also a co-sponsor of this draft resolution, which is now before the Committee for consideration.

The delegation of Peru is convinced that the resumption of nuclear testing contradicts the commitment and spirit of cooperation assumed by the international community last May when it decided in this very forum to extend indefinitely the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). My delegation believes that this attitude is not likely to benefit negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty and may, indirectly, prompt a similar attitude on the part of other countries that have a nuclear capacity.

Nuclear tests pose a potential risk to the health and security of the people of coastal States and to their natural resources and environment, contrary to the precautionary principle on international environmental law contained in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climatic Change, the Treaty of Maastricht and other international instruments.

The position of the delegation of Peru has consistently been identified with the position of the Pacific Basin countries. In accordance with its own realities and national interests, Peru is fully confident that the draft resolution introduced this morning by the delegation of Mexico will enjoy the widest possible support.

Mr. Larrain (Chile) (*interpretation from Spanish*): On behalf of the delegation of Chile I wish to speak about draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.3, which was introduced just now by the delegation of Mexico and co-sponsored by Chile. It is indeed distressing for us to have to do this, inasmuch as this text deeply deplores the acts of friendly nations with which we have relations of respect and cooperation.

From the time when China and, subsequently, France resumed their tests, we believed it to be our obligation to work, along with other countries, with a view to prevailing upon the General Assembly of the United Nations to pronounce overwhelmingly against these tests and request their immediate cessation.

Chile's action in this regard reflects its convictions deeply rooted in its foreign policy of commitment to disarmament and non-proliferation, and at the same time the genuine and spontaneous reaction of indignation which the tests stirred up in Chilean public opinion.

The tests are taking place at a unique moment in contemporary history. The root causes of the nuclear-arms race have been profoundly transformed at the international level, and the threat of nuclear confrontation has been fading away. Chile believed that the threat could be revived only if the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) were not extended indefinitely, thus leaving open the possibility that new centres of nuclear proliferation might appear at any time. For these reasons, Chile acceded to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and expressed its satisfaction at its indefinite extension.

We believe that the recent nuclear tests go against the logic that inspired the international community to extend the Treaty. As we have repeatedly pointed out, the reason for any nuclear test is to prepare for a real detonation in a war situation. With the NPT extended indefinitely and the cold war buried like a bad memory from another age, it is surprising that such tests are being carried out today in circumstances that did not prevail even when the extension of the NPT was uncertain.

At the present juncture of international security the nuclear explosions do not provide more security to the country that carries them out. What they produce is a profound uneasiness and a sense of insecurity in other nations. It is particularly serious that this should be happening at a time when a comprehensive test-ban treaty is being negotiated in Geneva.

The current underground tests are politically inopportune — doubly so in that they are taking place only days after the two countries signatories of the NPT had solemnly committed themselves to exercise "utmost restraint". It is true that the expression "utmost restraint" (*NPT/CONF.1995/32, Part I, annex, decision 2, para. 4 (a)*), which appears in the Final Document of the NPT Review and Extension Conference, does not juridically entail a prohibition. None the less, one must ask whether it is "restraint" to carry out as many detonations as have been announced when the ink is still not dry on the NPT commitments, in a region of the world in which sensibilities are deeply offended and at a time when it would be impossible to carry out such tests in other regions.

Finally, we denounce the tests, not only because they are politically inopportune and unjustified, but also because they affect our security. We have fundamental interests in the South Pacific, and France cannot guarantee that the tests are harmless to the environment and to health. There

are well-founded indications that the structure of Muroroa Atoll could be suffering damage and, if that is the case, that radioactive leaks or other phenomena with unforeseeable consequences could occur.

Perhaps we shall not suffer today the terrible consequences of an ecological disaster resulting from these tests in the Pacific, but there can be no guarantee that it will not happen in the future. There is still time to avoid that risk, and every country must assume its responsibility to do so.

In the historic gathering of the States parties to the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the Treaty of Rarotonga, held on 22 September last, the tests were denounced, and it was demanded that they cease immediately. Many other forums have joined in this request. Now it is the General Assembly's turn to raise its voice. It is therefore of the utmost importance that the General Assembly's pronouncement be by a large majority and unequivocal.

Mr. Musrasrik (Federated States of Micronesia): I wish to comment on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/50/L.3, entitled "Nuclear testing", of which my delegation is pleased to be a sponsor.

At the outset, I wish to express my delegation's support for the remarks made by the representative of Papua New Guinea on behalf of the South Pacific Forum countries, as well as those made by the delegation of Mexico and other sponsors.

The issue of nuclear testing is of special concern to my Government. We have heard repeated testimony in this forum that the cold war is over. In this decade we have witnessed the easing of tension between States, leading to international relationships that were once unthinkable.

Nations large and small gathered earlier this year at the Review and Extension Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to forge an environment of enhanced global security in connection with the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. At that gathering the NPT was extended indefinitely in return for the commitment of utmost restraint by the nuclear Powers. Commitments were also made for the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty by next year. My Government commends these actions, for they signal a positive process of nuclear disarmament and, certainly, the promotion of international peace and security.

However, just when international efforts seem to be on the right course towards the containment of the nuclear spectre, a self-interested few, reversing the direction of the disarmament process by conducting nuclear tests in our global environment, cannot but cause us to question the real value of the earlier commitments that gave us hope. The history of nuclear testing in the Pacific has chronicled the willingness of some nations to gamble with the lives and homelands of island inhabitants by conducting nuclear tests and engaging in other practices too hazardous to carry out at home.

We in the region of Micronesia — in particular our neighbour to the east, the Republic of the Marshall Islands — have felt the disastrous effects of nuclear tests on the health of our peoples. The contaminants remain in our environment, in our people and in our graves. Nuclear tests leave behind a legacy that does not know political boundaries and has a life span beyond that of our children and their great-grandchildren. The national security that a few States may hope to derive from nuclear testing cannot outweigh the certain suffering of many people and the devastation of their homelands and environment.

We support this draft resolution and its call for the cessation of all nuclear testing, and we urge other members to support it as well.

Ms. Mxakato-Diseko (South Africa): With regard to draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.3, which is before us, my delegation wishes to express its strong opposition to the current series of nuclear test explosions that have been conducted by two of the nuclear-weapon States. Despite repeated calls by the international community, further tests have been carried out. South Africa shares the international concern over the continued testing of nuclear weapons and once again strongly urges China and France to terminate their nuclear-testing programmes, abandon plans for future tests and join in a global moratorium on the testing of nuclear weapons.

In this regard, South Africa wishes to express its appreciation to those nuclear-weapon States which have maintained their commitment to the moratorium. South Africa's Government of National Unity feels strongly that the cessation of all nuclear testing will help in providing a favourable climate for the negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament to conclude a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty by June 1996. The conclusion of such a treaty forms an integral part of the Decision on Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament which was adopted by consensus at the 1995 Review and

Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) earlier this year. South Africa opposes nuclear-weapon testing as a matter of principle and we would like to see the draft resolution on this topic before us adopted by the First Committee and the General Assembly with the widest possible support.

Mrs. Bourgois (France) (*interpretation from French*): The Ambassador of Mexico introduced a draft resolution this morning on nuclear testing. With regard to its wording, as it now stands, France feels duty-bound to make certain comments: a draft resolution of this kind does not correspond either to the needs of the moment or to the simple requirements of truth and good faith. It does not meet the needs of the moment and, as many speakers have said, it is time to concentrate our efforts on reaching a comprehensive and definitive nuclear-test-ban treaty. That is why France co-sponsored the Australian draft resolution on the comprehensive test-ban treaty and that is why my country has publicly supported the zero option and was the first of the nuclear-weapon States to do so. Above all, France is working unrelentingly to ensure that the final text of this treaty shall be finalized as soon as possible — by 30 June 1996 at the latest and, if possible, even before that. The final version of the draft resolution introduced this morning no longer mentions 30 June 1996 as the date for the conclusion of the comprehensive test-ban treaty which was the only constructive part of the text. This being so, it leaves doubts as to the will of the authors to commit themselves as resolutely as we do to making the responsible moves that finalization of the text represents. They make it clear that their priorities lie elsewhere — in seeking to stir up emotions and controversy. It should also be time — I am sorry to bring this up again — for realism. The United Nations should take decisions regarding measures that can be taken immediately, instead of launching into rhetoric. We all know that in calling for the immediate cessation of testing, the authors of the draft resolution are not adopting an approach that can be given any consideration.

Moreover, what credibility can we give to the measures of a group of countries that are proposing to the Committee the adoption of a text which makes false assertions? This draft resolution puts forward the potentially negative effects on health and the environment. By suggesting that the French tests could have such effects, the draft resolution is disregarding the many studies carried out by independent and high-level scientists who have concluded that these tests are harmless. I would like to recall that very recently an Australian group of independent scientists submitted similar conclusions during the meeting of ministers for the environment of the South Pacific Forum in Brisbane held on 10 August 1995.

Moreover, this text emphasizes that the current tests are, allegedly, not consistent with undertakings by the nuclear-weapon States at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference. This assertion is false. France has always stated that it reserved the right to complete its programme. The "utmost restraint" decided upon in May 1995 was not chosen just by chance. It did not apply to a halt or a moratorium. It related to the commitment to carry out the strict minimal number of tests. France is therefore fully respecting this commitment.

In sum, the text submitted to the Committee today will no longer be relevant tomorrow. Instead of bringing together the community of nations in the comprehensive task of urgently moving towards non-proliferation, disarmament and peace, it strives to maintain suspicion, doubt and antagonism through a very-short-term measure, which should be unacceptable here.

Mr. Tauwhare (United Kingdom): We have heard some emotional statements on the subject of nuclear testing today and in the course of the work of this First Committee, but I fear that in the process, many of the facts have been ignored and, indeed, distorted. I would like to concentrate, if I may, on one point in this draft resolution, and that is the assertion that nuclear testing is not consistent with the undertakings of the nuclear-weapon States at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). When the language "utmost restraint" was negotiated, China and France made clear that it was not synonymous with a moratorium. Furthermore, China made quite clear that it intended to test, and France specifically reserved its right to do so if a new French Government should decide that it was necessary.

Now, the British Government is not under attack on this issue. We have not tested since the Review Conference and we have no intention of doing so. I hope, therefore, that it is possible for our delegation to stand up and say clearly that in the light of the negotiating history, the statement in the fourth preambular paragraph of this draft resolution:

> "that nuclear testing is not consistent with undertakings by the nuclear-weapon States at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons"

is simply not true.

Mr. Choi (Republic of Korea): The Republic of Korea co-sponsored the draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.3 on nuclear testing for simple but clear reasons. First, my Government is strongly opposed to all forms of nuclear proliferation, be it vertical or horizontal. We are concerned that nuclear testing is likely to weaken the sanctity and credibility the non-proliferation commitment made by States parties in the wake of the indefinite extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). While the entire world benefits from the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, it is undeniable that the nuclear-weapon States benefit more than others. What is expected of the nuclear-weapon States at this stage is that they set an example by exercising the utmost restraint in nuclear testing, if only to strengthen the integrity and credibility of the global non-proliferation regime.

Secondly, nuclear testing goes against the spirit that made possible the indefinite extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). It is time to move on to the conclusion of the comprehensive test-ban treaty and to embark on nuclear disarmament, beginning with a serious effort to obtain a cut-off treaty with the ultimate objective of the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

In this context, nuclear testing by some nuclear-weapon States runs counter to the rising expectations of mankind to live in a world free of nuclear weapons. We believe that the adoption of this draft resolution with the widest possible support will strengthen the cause of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament.

Mrs. Kurokochi (Japan): I should like to say a few words in support of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/50/L.31, which was introduced by the representative of Mongolia.

As I stated in the course of the general debate, Japan attaches importance to the activities and programmes conducted by the Regional Centre at Kathmandu, which constitute what is called a "Kathmandu process", to which Japan has been extending considerable assistance.

It is for this reason that Japan decided to become a sponsor, together with other interested countries in the region, of draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.31. My delegation hopes that the draft resolution will enjoy the widest possible support when it comes to be voted on.

Mr. Starr (Australia): I would just like to clarify one or two points that have been made in the course of the meeting, in particular relating to views of Australian scientists regarding nuclear testing in the South Pacific. I would make the point quite clearly that these scientists stated in their report that information was inadequate, that they could not declare what the long-term effects of nuclear testing would be on the atoll environment and specifically that access was still less than complete, as was information on the subject.

In these circumstances concerns by States in the region are, in our view, eminently reasonable and I think it is appropriate for the international community to express, in draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.3, its deep concern regarding the potential damage to the environment and to health caused by underground testing.

The Chairman: I now call on the representative of the Netherlands to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.18, on transparency in armaments.

Mr. Ramaker (Netherlands): During our thematic discussions last week, I expressed to the Committee some general thoughts relating to the concepts of confidence-building measures and transparency in armaments. Today I am returning to those issues and I intend to focus briefly on draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.18, on transparency in armaments and, more particularly, the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms.

This subject has been on the agenda of the General Assembly for a number of years. After the Register of Conventional Arms was established by General Assembly resolution 46/36 L it was adopted by consensus in the following years, as reflected in General Assembly resolutions 47/52 L and 48/75 E. Last year the General Assembly continued to support this concept with 150 votes in favour and none against.

The Register is at present a widely accepted confidence-building measure aimed at promoting openness, confidence and, therefore, greater stability among nations by providing the international community with official data on the international transfers of seven categories of conventional weapons. The last two reports of the Secretary-General containing the replies of Member States on their imports and exports of the conventional weapons concerned listed about 90 returns to the Register.

In his report of 13 October 1995 on the Register (A/50/547) the Secretary-General listed 84 returns thus far from Member States for the year 1994. On the basis of last year's experience, the total number of returns for 1994 can

be expected eventually to reach roughly the same level as in the two preceding years, possibly a little higher.

The assessment of the first three years of the operation of the Register remains positive. The level of participation this year, as in previous years, is encouraging. Although the number of replies continues to vacillate around little less than half the United Nations membership, the returns cover the bulk of the international arms trade in the seven categories of weapons to which I referred.

In 1992 and 1993, for instance, about 90 per cent of the arms transfers in question were reported. It is therefore safe to assume that most of the other half of the United Nations membership that did not reply did not export or import any of the weapons concerned. It is important, however, that Member States which have neither imported nor exported weapons also inform the Secretary-General of this fact because these so-called "nil" returns show that no arms have been transferred, which in itself should promote confidence. Moreover it indicates that the Member States concerned are willing to participate in this confidence-building exercise so that participation in the Register could, and should, be improved, while the participation, especially in certain regions and subregions, is of paramount importance, not only for the further consolidation of the Register itself, but of course also for confidence-building.

As far as expansion of the scope of the Register is concerned, the 1994 Group of Governmental Experts reaffirmed the goal of early expansion of the Register by the inclusion of data on military holdings and procurement through national production. But it could not reach agreement for such inclusion on the same basis as for transfers.

A growing number of States agree that the Register would become more complete and useful if it covered military holdings and procurement from national production. This means that, not only the continuing operation, but also the further development, of the Register will have to remain the subject of future review.

On behalf of the following countries, I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.18, entitled "Transparency in armaments", on behalf of the following countries: Albania, Argentina, Australia, Austria, the Bahamas, Belarus, Belgium, Bhutan, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, Côte d'Ivoire, Costa Rica, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kazakstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mali, Malta, the Marshall Islands, Monaco, Nepal, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, the Russian Federation, Samoa, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, the Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Swaziland, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

Thus, I am happy to say that, once again, over a third of the United Nations membership has put its weight behind the present draft resolution.

Allow me, Sir, to explain briefly the main features and purpose of the draft resolution: the draft resolution is, in essence, a procedural one, aimed at maintaining the momentum of the Register of Conventional Arms and encouraging wider participation in it. In it the Assembly would reaffirm the determination of the international community to ensure the effective operation of the Register and, as was the case in preceding years, call upon Member States to provide the requested data by 30 April annually.

Furthermore, the General Assembly would reconfirm the decision in last year's resolution 49/75 C, adopted by an overwhelming majority, to convene another group of governmental experts in 1997 to review the operation of the Register and its further development.

Thirdly, the Conference on Disarmament would be invited to consider continuing its work in the field of transparency in armaments. At the 1995 session of the Conference it was not possible to resume work on the subject for reasons largely lying elsewhere. We do hope that next year the Conference will find the opportunity to continue its work on this important subject of transparency in armaments. Both the Register and the work in the Conference on Disarmament are only a few years old. Experience has shown that multilateral disarmament needs time to mature.

In this draft resolution, the aim of the sponsors is to confirm the widespread support the Register has acquired in recent years. In this respect, I am encouraged by the solid support for the concept of transparency in armaments, as embodied in the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, as expressed both during the general debate and in the thematic discussions last week.

Mr. de Icaza (Mexico) (*interpretation from Spanish*): My delegation wishes to make some clarifications with regard to draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.3, which I had the honour of introducing this morning.

I believe that the motivation is not a privilege of any one of the members of this Committee. I should like to point out that nowhere does the draft resolution say that nuclear tests — underground tests — are without any doubt and with full certainty a danger to health and the environment. The draft resolution says that there is concern about the potential effects; it cannot be denied that such concern exists. It has been manifested and declared by Heads of State, by meetings of Heads of State, by regional organizations, by the international community. The concern is a fact, and this is entirely in keeping with truth and good faith. The draft resolution says that nuclear testing is not consistent with undertakings by the nuclear-weapon States at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference. It does not say that this is a violation: it says that it is not consistent; and this is a matter of interpretation, it is not a matter of incontrovertible truth or of good faith.

The draft resolution does not say that we are not going to conclude negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty within the dates mentioned in another draft resolution, which my delegation will be presenting tomorrow. The draft resolution says that we are convinced that the cessation of nuclear tests will provide a favourable climate for the conclusion of negotiations, and we are convinced of this, and in doing so we are not failing in truth or in good faith.

The draft resolution urges the immediate cessation of all nuclear testing and deplores current testing. It is not a question of a passing phenomenon: at no time does it say that it is for a year that nuclear testing should cease. No delegation here can assure us that, when the General Assembly meets next year, there will not be any nuclear Power carrying out tests.

We the sponsors of the draft resolution are not failing in our duty to the truth or in good faith: it is others who are thus failing.

Mr. Onanga-Anyanga (Gabon) (*interpretation from French*): My delegation wishes to make a few comments on draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.18.

My delegation wishes to point out that we fully share the concerns that have been mentioned in the draft resolution. We were not a sponsor, but we will certainly support it. However, we should like to emphasize the fact that expansion of the Register should take into account, not only existing stockpiles and production in weapon-producing States, but also the idea that the categories covered by the Register should be extended too. Here I would like to share with you a concern on the part of a Central African country. In the course of a seminar on the Register organized recently, it was pointed out that the Member States of this region did not contribute to the Register *inter alia* because the categories of weapons covered by the Register did not concern the majority of the Member States of the region. And in this regard, we wondered if it might be necessary to suggest the idea of a second register: it could cover States of the subregion or those States directly concerned by the proliferation of small weapons.

I would like to draw this to the attention of the Committee to suggest that the concept of expansion should not apply solely to existing stockpiles, but also to the nature and category of weapons covered in the Register.

Mr. Laptsenak (Belarus) (*interpretation from Russian*): I would like to speak very briefly on draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.18.

With all that is going on we clearly need to increase the transparency in regard to armaments. Belarus, as has been stated by other States, was among the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.18, on transparency. The broad number of sponsors of the draft resolution testifies to the relevance of the issues raised in it. We submit information to the Register regularly. We believe the number of countries is growing and we call upon all States to support this draft resolution and to adopt it by consensus.

The Chairman: I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Kheradi (Secretary of the Committee): As a number of delegations have added their names to the list of sponsors since I read out the earlier list this morning, I will now read out the updated list, which of course incorporates the earlier ones also. The following countries have become sponsors of the following draft resolutions:

A/C.1/50/L.1/Rev.1: Chile, Mongolia, Nigeria, Portugal, Slovakia and Cambodia;

A/C.1/50/L.3: Botswana, Maldives, Panama, Paraguay, Thailand, Ukraine and Bhutan;

A/C.1/50/L.5: Cuba and Trinidad and Tobago;

A/C.1/50/L.7: Australia, Belarus, Canada, Germany, Côte d'Ivoire, Iceland, Mali, Norway, Peru, Sweden, Romania, Republic of Moldova, United Kingdom, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Denmark and Finland;

A/C.1/50/L.8: Ethiopia, France, United Kingdom, Bulgaria, Philippines, Belgium, United States, Greece, Republic of Korea, Denmark, Nigeria, Estonia, Madagascar, Myanmar, Ukraine, Luxembourg, Czech Republic, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Kazakstan;

A/C.1/50/L.9: Russian Federation, Republic of Moldova, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran and Kenya;

A/C.1/50/L.11: Mongolia, Argentina, Ethiopia, Kenya and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia;

A/C.1/50/L.12: Singapore, Sri Lanka and Poland;

A/C.1/50/L.13: the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Honduras and Australia;

A/C.1/50/L.14: Chile and Peru;

A/C.1/50/L.16: Kenya and Kazakstan;

A/C.1/50/L.24: Japan;

A/C.1/50/L.15: Argentina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Cambodia; and

A/C.1/50/L.18: Armenia and Costa Rica.

I would also like to announce that a meeting of the interested delegations with respect to draft resolution A/C.1/50/L.49, entitled "1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons", sponsored by Sri Lanka, will be held today at 3.15 p.m. in Conference Room D.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.